



Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport



**Historic
Royal Palaces**

Historic Royal Palaces

Chair

Information Pack for Applicants

Profile

Chair of Historic Royal Palaces

Introduction

Historic Royal Palaces is a leading independent charity that wants to make deep connections with people through the six sites of national importance in its care. We are seeking a Chair to lead our Board as we pursue a renewed focus on our charitable purpose and the public benefit that we bring.

The Appointment of Chair of the Board is made by His Majesty The King, following the recommendation of the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

DCMS is committed to eliminating discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity in its public appointments. We particularly encourage applicants from underrepresented groups, those based outside London and the South-East and applicants who have achieved success through non-traditional educational routes. This ensures that boards of public bodies benefit from a full range of diverse perspectives and are representative of the people they serve.

About Historic Royal Palaces

Historic Royal Palaces (HRP) is the custodian of some of the United Kingdom's most well-known historic buildings: the Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace, Kensington Palace, the Banqueting House at Whitehall, Kew Palace and Hillsborough Castle in Northern Ireland. In recent times, it has welcomed five million people a year to the sites and reached many more off-site and online.

Our Cause is '*stir every spirit to inspire and provoke change*', which challenges us to connect with people's heads and hearts.

The five London palaces are owned by His Majesty The King in Right of Crown and are held for the benefit of the nation by the Government through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Hillsborough Castle is owned by the Government and is The King's Official Residence in Northern Ireland.

HRP is a charity established by Royal Charter in 1998. Under the Royal Charter, HRP has two primary aims:

- (a) to manage, conserve, renovate, repair, maintain and improve the palaces to a high standard consistent with their status as buildings of royal association and historic and/or architectural importance; and
- (b) to help everyone learn about the palaces, the skills required for their conservation and the wider story of how monarchs and people together have shaped society by providing public access, by exhibition, by events and education programmes, by the preparation of records, by research and by publication, and by such other means as are appropriate.

Since 1998, HRP has been responsible for the five London palaces under a contract with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Responsibility for Hillsborough Castle is under a lease from the Northern Ireland Office.

HRP is also a public corporation and receives no public revenue funding: all costs are met by self-generated income. Turnover in 2019/20 was c. £100 million, the majority being from visitor admissions.

Like many other organisations, HRP was severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; the palaces were closed for long periods and self-generated income dropped to £12m in 2020/21. A restructure in 2020 reduced the size of the organisation by 40% and expenditure was cut by a half. Financial losses were met from cash reserves, and a Culture Recovery Fund loan of £40m was taken out early in 2022 to provide stability.

Nonetheless, HRP has been a self-financing independent charity for over 20 years, with an extensive record of achievement and, after two years of losses, we returned to surplus in 2022/23. Our financial forecast for the years ahead is positive and, with confidence in our rapid recovery, we are making plans for a renewed focus on our charitable purpose, in which the new Chair will play an essential part.

Further information about HRP is available on its website; www.hrp.org.uk.

Governance

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the conduct and aims of the charity, although much of this is delegated to the Chief Executive on a day-to-day basis. The Chief Executive is also accountable to Parliament as Accounting Officer.

The charity cannot take part in party politics, and the separation from political activities and controversy is even greater for Historic Royal Palaces than for other charities due to its association with His Majesty The King.

The Board consists of a Chair and eleven Trustees, chosen for their skills and experience. All are non-executive and unpaid.

The Chair is appointed by HM The King on the advice of the Secretary of State. Four Trustees are appointed by HM The King, of whom three are ex-officio appointments:

the Director of the Royal Collection; the Keeper of the Privy Purse and the Lord Chamberlain (unless he chooses not to take up the appointment, in which case HM The King may appoint someone to take his place, as currently). The remaining seven Trustees are appointed by the Secretary of State, two of whom are ex-officio; the Constable of the Tower of London and the Chair of the Campaign Board.

The strategy of the organisation is based on the simple but profound idea that we will root our work, more than ever, in our charitable purpose and the public benefit we bring, with a bold ambition to be for everyone, whoever and wherever they are. It will mean taking our work to new levels of reach and inclusion, investing in the programmes that will achieve this, and in the palaces, collections and content that we want everyone to enjoy. It will also mean pushing faster at the sustainability of our sites and our organisation so that we can play our part, with everyone, in the challenge of climate change.

Our self-funding model – in which income funds our charitable purpose, and our purpose gives meaning to making money – is strong, and makes every role in HRP, wherever it is, an important one.

The Role

The previous Chair, Rupert Gavin, concluded seven years in office on 4 July 2022. Carole Souter, who has nearly seven years' experience as a Trustee of HRP is currently serving as the Interim Chair. The new Chair will lead the Board of Trustees as we pursue a renewed focus on our charitable purpose and the public benefit that we bring.

Key accountabilities

- **Board leadership:** agreeing agendas for and chairing main Board meetings; Board effectiveness and Trustee appraisals, appointment/renewal of trustees; chairing the Nominations & Governance sub-committee, membership of the Finance & Investment sub-committee, and occasional attendance as observer at other board sub-committees.
- **Working with the Chief Executive and Executive Board Directors:** supporting and holding the Chief Executive to account, setting and reviewing annual objectives, routine working meetings (every two to three weeks), regular phone calls/emails for consultation and sharing information, support and guidance as required. Plus, occasionally working with Directors and senior managers when the Chair's experience would be helpful.
- **Fundraising:** Leading (with others) prospect cultivation and donor stewardship at a senior level; building a group of Trustees that is committed to fundraising at Board and individual level.

- Visible leadership: inside and outside HRP – attending and speaking at HRP previews, openings, events; visits to projects, staff visits; attending external events on behalf of HRP.
- Senior stakeholder and partner relationships: acting as an ambassador for HRP, building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders and partners (ie. The Royal Family and The Royal Household, government especially The Department for Culture, Media & Sport and Northern Ireland Office; secretaries of state and ministers; chairs of other organisations.

Term of office

Trustees' appointments are for three years. They may serve second terms, if approved, and have this extended further in exceptional circumstances.

Time commitment

The time commitment is around one day per week (including attendance at events), spread across the year. The main Board meets four times a year (plus one for the accounts if necessary) and there are main sub committees covering Nominations, Finance & Investment, People and Audit & Risk, as well as other committees and working groups, which usually meet two or three times a year and to which the Chair is invited but may not always attend.

Office support

It is assumed that the Chair will have their own office and administrative support for business and interests beyond HRP, and for personal arrangements and convenience. However, HRP will provide the support necessary for Board matters, Chair's correspondence and the provision of necessary documentation.

Candidate Profile

All candidates will need to demonstrate in their application the majority of the following essential criteria:

- Senior leadership experience in at least one of the charitable, public, academic or business sectors;
- Well-developed understanding of the principles of corporate governance, with an understanding of the complexities and subtleties of large non- profit organisations;
- The ability to chair organisations successfully at Board level;
- Excellent communication skills with the ability to represent Historic Royal Palaces with confidence to current Trustees, Government and key stakeholders;
- Genuine care about Historic Royal Palaces, its cause and fields of interest and show commitment to heritage generally;
- A commitment to preserving cultural heritage, and improving education and understanding of British and World history and;
- A commitment to improving opportunities for people throughout the UK and access to people from a diverse range of backgrounds.

How to apply

To apply, please send:

- a CV of not more than two sides of A4;
- a supporting statement of not more than three sides of A4, providing examples and setting out how you meet the criteria;
- The Diversity Monitoring Form which must be completed by clicking this [link](#), before submitting your application – please note this replaces the previous PDF monitoring form;
- and the Declaration of Interests Form.

Completed applications should be emailed to: publicappointments@dcms.gov.uk. Please put 'Historic Royal Palaces - Chair' in the Subject line.

If you have any questions about the appointments process, please contact Victoria Watts, Campaign Manager at DCMS (victoria.watts@dcms.gov.uk).

If you would like to speak about the role itself, please contact Stephen Corri, Interim Head of Governance and Planning at Historic Royal Palaces (Stephen.corri@hrp.org.uk).

Diversity and inclusion

We want to ensure any appointee is committed to promoting diversity, in its broadest possible sense. This will include embedding a commitment to the principles of levelling up and championing opportunity for all across the organisation, helping to ensure that the organisation is one in which a genuinely diverse range of views can be expressed, without fear or favour.

We ask all applicants to complete a diversity monitoring form. We hope you will help us by providing this information. Your data is not disclosed to the panel, but allows us to constantly evaluate any potential barriers to becoming a public appointee and what we can do to encourage a more diverse field to apply.

Disability Confident

We guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the role. By ‘minimum criteria,’ we mean that you must provide evidence in your application, which demonstrates that you meet the level of competence required under the majority of the essential criteria.

If you wish to apply under this scheme, state this in the covering email or letter when submitting your application. This will in no way prejudice your application.

Reasonable adjustments

If you would like a confidential discussion regarding any reasonable adjustments ahead of making your application or during the process, please contact us.

DCMS is a ministerial department, supported by 45 agencies and public bodies.

If you are not completely satisfied

We aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact publicappointments@culture.gov.uk.

Supporting information

This appointments process adheres to the Cabinet Office [Governance Code on Public Appointments](#), which is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

All applicants are expected to abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life and the [12 Principles of Governance](#).

Eligibility Criteria

You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- you become bankrupt or make an arrangement with a creditor
- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors;
- you are disqualified from acting as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986;
- you have been convicted of a criminal offence, the conviction not being spent for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (c. 53);
- you become subject to a debt relief order or a bankruptcy restrictions order;
- you fail to declare any conflict of interest.

Conflicts of Interest and Due Diligence

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the organisation, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your application. If you have queries about this and would like to discuss further please contact the Public Appointments Team.

Given the nature of public appointments, it is important that those appointed as members of public bodies maintain the confidence of Parliament and the public. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment, or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Advisory Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue(s) in your application. In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media.

As part of our due diligence checks we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This will include us undertaking searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. This information may be made available to the Advisory Assessment Panel and they may wish to explore issues with you should you be

invited to interview. The information may also be shared with ministers and the Cabinet Office.

Expenses

Expenses incurred by external candidates during the recruitment process will not be reimbursed, except in exceptional circumstances, and only when agreed in advance.